

AMATEURADIO

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Long Distance Ham Radio Contact Aids Child

by Judy Tarjanyi



George Brown and his Amateur Radio equipment helped to deliver a special garment to a badly burned child in Venezuela. Brown says that "a lot of amateurs do this sort of thing all the time."

(photo by Luke Black)

Toledo, OH — A South American Amateur Radio operator used his long-distance connections to get his year-old daughter a special garment for burn victims.

John Navarro, of San Cristobal, Venezuela, attempted to contact Amateur Radio operators in Toledo to obtain a vest from the Jobst Institute for his daughter, Avianca, who was burned.

Although no one from Toledo picked up his signal, he did get a response from an operator in Atlanta. That person in turn used a phone patch to put him in touch with Dr. Recto Natividad, a Toledo physician who also is chief of medical services for the city health department. [A phone patch is a telephone to Amateur Radio inter-connection.]

Dr. Natividad said he suspects he got the call because his name is listed in a worldwide directory of physicians and attorneys who are Jehovah's Witnesses.

Members of the sect, he said, are closely knit and try to help each other all over the world. Mr. Navarro also is a Jehovah's Witness.

Dr. Natividad then contacted another Witnesses member, George Brown, a Springfield Township resident who has been an Amateur Radio operator for 64 of his 77 years.

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Radio Hams Scan the Skies to Save Lives

by Brian Dunbar, Garland Daily News

When tornado-spawning weather threatens Dallas County, 75 Garland ham radio operators are off to the RACES.

The 75 men and women are members of the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service — RACES — a group that helps the city of Garland and Dallas County keep track of nearing bad weather in case civil defense measures are necessary.

RACES, actually pronounced to rhyme with “ladies,” is a strictly volunteer organization. (Federal law prohibits FCC-licensed amateurs from receiving compensation for use of their radios.) All hold full-time jobs elsewhere, but that has not lessened their enthusiasm for their avocation.

The members of the group lead normal lives — until thunderstorms show up west of Fort Worth. Then, prompted by a signal from the National Weather Service, they go to work.

The weather service “is normally watching the weather situation,” said Bob Jones, a Rockwell International employee who serves as a liaison between RACES and the city.

“The watch is informal until the storm is just west of Tarrant County. Then the weather service puts us on alert. We alert each other by a coding system.”

The coding system emits a signal from the radio, even one that is turned off, calling the owner for storm-spotting duty.

Once the signal is given, the RACES group (usually 30 or 40 of the members respond to the signal) spreads out over northeast Dallas County to watch for the approach of the storm.

“Each of us has his favorite high spots,” Jones said, adding that he heads Garland’s Emergency Operations Center on the fourth floor of City Hall, where he relays messages from the field to the city’s Community Services Director, Denny Wheat.

“We try to look at storm cells from several different angles,” Jones said. “Rarely is there just one observer watching.”

RACES members work not only before the storm but after. Crews were in Wichita Falls the day after a tornado ravaged the town in 1981, providing emergency communications for authorities.

Sky-watching allows the radio operators to fuse several interests.

“We are communicators,” said James Hester. “It’s a hobby we already have spent money on and practiced. RACES lets us perform a public service with something we’ve been doing anyway.”

The tornado sirens have not sounded in Garland, except for practice at 1 p.m. the first Wednesday of every other month. When it finally does happen, RACES will have bought Garland residents a few extra minutes to prepare.

(Reprinted with permission from Garland (TX) Daily News)

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Brown was able to reach Navarro on the radio and arranged for him to mail a prescription for the special Jobst garment to Toledo.

Brown received the prescription the following Sunday and drove to the Jobst Institute the next day to have it filled.

The garment, which is a vest with one arm, will cover the part of the child’s body that has been burned and help control scarring, a spokesman for the Institute said. It is made of an elasticized material, known as Jobskin, and acts as a second skin for burn patients.

Brown said he has no idea how the Navarro girl was burned as his conversation with her father has been limited to details of how to get the garment to her.

He also was reluctant to take much credit for his efforts, saying “a lot of Amateurs (radio operators) do this all the time.”

(Reprinted with permission from The Blade, Toledo, OH)

Amateur Radio Assists Red Cross

A new Communications Center opened last year at the Red Cross office in Mundelein, Ill. The cooperative venture between Red Cross Lake County District and the Libertyville-Mundelein Amateur Radio Society (LAMARS) is a unique effort to aid effective emergency communication worldwide. The center's major function is to transmit disaster



welfare inquiries (DWIs), damage assessment reports and other communiques necessary for Red Cross emergency operations, especially important when other means of communication are inoperable.

LAMARS operates the center's ham radio station. Donated by several commercial suppliers in the area, equipment includes telecommunication machines, radio receivers and transmitters. Also, the U.S. Weather Bureau transmits data to the center where the information can be passed to alert affected areas. This resource is especially valuable during the tornado season when seconds count for preventive action.

Membership of LAMARS includes about 75 Amateur (ham) Radio operators. Twenty-five are also trained Red Cross disaster volunteers from the Lake County area, including LAMARS president Fred Race of Antioch, Chief in the U.S. Navy at Great Lakes. Deputy Sheriff of Lake County, Robert Schenck of Mundelein, who is chairman of the district's disaster communications committee, and Bernie Leonard of Wildwood, damage assessment chairman, are also members of LAMARS.

On the center's dedication day, national Board of Governors member Herbert "Pete" Hoover, III, ham radio operator and Red Cross disaster volunteer for the Los Angeles Chapter, transmitted congratulatory messages from the late Victor C. Clark, Amateur Radio operator and past president of the American Radio Relay League; Jim Hickey, manager of the Red Cross midwestern field office and Richard E. Schubert, president of the American Red Cross. "The center should serve as a model for other chapters that wish to extend their capabilities in this vital role," Mr. Schubert said.

(Reprinted with permission from CURRENTS and the American Red Cross, Mid-America Chapter.)

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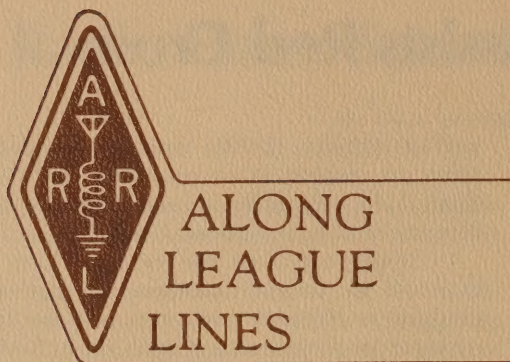
is more extensive, he will attempt to repair it. Usually, he owns backup gear to operate during these times.

Finally, every Amateur Radio operator prides himself on his operating competence. Many radio amateurs participate in contests and exercises to sharpen these operating skills. Not only is it great fun to see who wins, but it keeps the amateurs' operating skills and equipment in top shape for a real emergency. Radio equipment is often subject to a 100% duty cycle for up to 48 hours at a time during these activities.

Next month, radio amateurs will demonstrate their abilities as emergency communicators during the fifty-first annual ARRL Field Day exercise. Operating under simulated emergency conditions — without commercial power

and using portable antennas and equipment — the goal of the exercise is to make as many contacts as possible in a 24-hour period. Continuous practice will ensure a proficient, reliable Amateur Radio Service that will serve in the public interest without cost to taxpayers.

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE AMATEUR RADIO SERVICE? Contact Perry Williams, ARRL's Washington Area Coordinator, and arrange for a personal visit by calling (202) 296-9107.



The Amateur Radio Service plays many important roles, particularly during emergencies when normal lines of communication break down. At no cost to the government or citizens, Amateur Radio operators are able to respond to emergency situations quickly and efficiently when needed. It is important to note that these things don't "just happen;" they are attributed to several basic characteristics that make up Amateur Radio, which are often taken for granted by the public.

First, Amateur Radio is an internationally recognized service. Almost every country, regardless of ideology, has an active Amateur Radio Service. In many instances such as the earthquakes in California and volcano eruptions in Hawaii, radio amateurs were among the first on the scene to lend communications assistance. Very often, Amateur Radio becomes the sole provider of communications to and from a disaster area. Since Amateur Radio is international in scope, a number of amateurs may be listening at any one

time, so chances are good that a fellow amateur will be close by to assist.

Second, a great deal of versatility is built into the Amateur Radio Service. Amateur Radio operators have access to a variety of communications modes (such as radio teleprinter, Morse Code, or voice communication), different frequency bands of operation, and high power operation. This flexibility enables radio amateurs to overcome such obstacles as terrain, distance, or atmospheric conditions that can hinder communications.

Technical competence is another virtue that Amateur Radio operators possess. One is required to demonstrate technical and operating knowledge before he is issued a license. If a disaster strikes and an antenna falls down, the amateur will go out and repair the damage, or in a pinch, can improvise a quick substitute out of a piece of wire. If his radio or "rig" blows a fuse, he will replace it. If the damage

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